COMMUNISM IN THE PHILIPPINES [9]

Communism exists in the Philippines, although in an embryonic stage. It would be strange if this were not so. Nearby is China, where that much harassed Republic has constantly to fight the communistic hordes. Nearby is Japan, where the Government is ever on the alert to repress any movement of the masses. Not far away are Siberia and the Union of Soviet Republics, where Filipinos have studied the principles of Bolshevism and Communism. The Philippine Proletariat Congress alone has a membership of around 20,000.

In March, 1935, the *Kati$unan Ng Magbubukid* held a convention in a province near Manila. The Congress was attended by about one thousand peasants from all over the Philippines. Mostly they were dressed in red garments and waved red flags. During the convention it was revealed that its members have three main purposes in view: the rejection of the Philippine Constitution, the establishment of the Soviet form of government in the Philippines, and the inauguration of a countrywide strike.

Communism finds a virgin field for propaganda in the Philippines. Unemployed laborers in the commercial centers and discontented tenants on the large *haciendas* (plantations), who all too frequently are taken advantage of by unscrupulous landowners, are easy converts. The spirit of Communism has found a ready response in Manila and the central Luzon provinces, culminating in the spirit of revolt. Only in regions where the Filipino owns his little tract of land

has the movement made no headway.

Philippine Communism no longer pretends to operate secretly. It has been this effrontery on the part of its leaders which has placed them behind prison bars. At its door is laid

[9] **See Major Emanuel A, Baja, *Philippine Police System and Its Problems* (i933)j PP-** ***1*6 ** seq.***